

Bridget O'Connell, Ed.D.

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Proven student-centered leadership with a focus on academic excellence, customized learning, and community collaboration in promoting the mission of the Palisades School District.

Current Experience

Superintendent - Palisades School District, Kintnersville, PA

August 2011 – PRESENT

- Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year 2022
- Hosted and served as panelist on Palisades Community Mental Health Panel (October 2022)
- Enhanced high school career pathways through use of advisory boards and alumni surveys (2021-2022)
- Reopened the district for both in-person (5 days a week) and remote instruction at the beginning of the 2020 school year
- Implemented one to one Chromebook initiative and learning management system 6th - 12th grade during the 2017 school year which supported the district in reopening remotely during 2020 school closures
- Serve as district Pandemic Coordinator and district lead for the initial development and ongoing review of the Health and Safety Plan
- Implement programs and instructional practices that focus on the learning needs of all students (Palisades Cyber Academy, Blended Instruction, Career Pathways)
- Oversee the development and implementation of \$51.5M annual budget
- Supervise and develop a cohesive, dynamic team of building and district administrators
- Support School Board in all aspects of governance and professional development including: new board orientation, board roles and responsibilities, health care reform, special education, negotiations, local board legislative advocacy, and handbook development
- Serve as district Act 44 Safety and Security Coordinator and oversee all aspects of district security and reporting
- Engage in ongoing outreach and engagement with community organizations and partners
- Maintain active and productive relationships with local, state and U.S. elected officials in order to successfully advocate on behalf of the district (State Representatives Labs and Staats, Senator Mensch and US Congressman Fitzpatrick)
- Represented the Palisades School District at President Obama's launch of the Future Ready initiative and Superintendents' Summit at the White House (November, 2014)

- Created Pennsylvania State Police Workspace at Palisades High School – First in state (2013)
- Facilitated fiscal, academic and voting region transfer of Riegelsville Borough (formerly Easton Area School District) residents into the Palisades School District (2012)

Adjunct Professor - Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA

August 2008 – PRESENT

- Course Title: *Curriculum Management for the School Executive*
- Routinely serve as doctoral dissertation committee member for Lehigh doctoral candidates

District Awards and Achievements

2012 – PRESENT

- Palisades High School – US News and World Report Best High Schools National Silver (2022)
- Tincum Elementary School – National Blue Ribbon School (2021)
- US News and World Report – Top 100 Best High Schools in PA (2021)
- Palisades High School (7 years), Palisades Middle School (2 years) and Durham Nockamixon Elementary School (1 year) continue to fulfill obligations to maintain No Place for Hate designations by the Anti-Defamation League (2021-2022)
- Outstanding Visual Arts Community (October 2020) Pennsylvania Art Education Association
- Best Communities for Music Education in the nation (2020 and 2021) NAMM Foundation
- Palisades High School World Language Department- PSMLA Exemplary Program Award for 2019-2021. (March 2020) Pennsylvania Modern Language Association
- District 11 Champions – Baseball – Spring 2021
- Colonial League Champions – Wrestling – Winter 2021
- Cross Country State Champion – Tom Smigo – Fall 2021 and Fall 2022
- District 11 – 2A Champions – Football – Fall 2020
- School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support Recognition (2020) Pennsylvania Positive Behavior Support (PAPBS) Network
- Recipient of \$25,000 Teacher in the Workplace state grant to enhance pathway programs at the high school (January 2020)
- *Newsweek* Top STEM High School 2020
- Recognized as a Don Eichhorn School to Watch – Palisades Middle School (February 2019)
- Recipient of \$177,000 PA Educational Access Grant to implement 1:1 in grades 6-12 (2016-2017)
- Featured district in United States Department of Education – Office of Ed Tech: Future Ready Leadership

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhdwy3ASoEfkU27IJ2HAKTJh-ACanSPs_g

- Pennsylvania Department of Education: Keystone Awards for achieving AYP in all buildings for 10 consecutive years
- District selected as a PA LEADS grant recipient for work in the area of Standards Aligned Systems (SAS) and collaboration
- Recognized by American Red Cross for outstanding community support and collaboration while serving for eight days as a shelter in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy (2013)
- Outstanding Contribution to Blended Learning Award (2012) for Palisades Cyber Academy
- Selected as feature location for Blended Learning Annual Jubilee Celebration (2012)

Previous Experience

Assistant Superintendent - Palisades School District, Kintnersville, PA

2007 – 2011

Supervisor of Curriculum and Federal Programs – Quakertown Community School District, Quakertown, PA

2005 – 2007

Acting Assistant to the Superintendent - Palisades School District, Kintnersville, PA

2004 – 2005

High School Assistant Principal - Palisades School District, Kintnersville, PA

2003- 2004

High School English, Social Studies and Gifted Education Teacher and Cross Country Coach - Palisades School District, Kintnersville, PA

1997 – 2003

Men's and Women's Assistant Track Coach – Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA

1995 - 1997

Degrees and Certifications

AASA/PASA - National Superintendent Certificate Program - 2021

Pennsylvania Department of Education - Superintendent Academy – 2017

University of Pennsylvania – Certificate in Leadership Dynamics – 2015

The Education Policy and Leadership Center – Policy Fellow – 2014

Cornell University: School of Industrial and Labor Relations – Master's Certificate in Human Resources - 2012

Lehigh University – Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership – 2007

Lehigh University – Master of Education, Secondary Education – 1997

Lehigh University – Bachelor of Arts, English and Anthropology – 1995

Pennsylvania Department of Education – Certifications include: Superintendent Letter of Eligibility, Assistant Superintendent Letter of Eligibility, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Secondary Principal, English 7-12 and Social Studies 7-12
Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) – Master Scuba Diver – 2017

Current Affiliations and Memberships

- American Association of School Administrators (AASA) - Board of Governors
- Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) - Board of Governors and Resolutions Committee
- St. Luke's Hospital Quakertown Campus - Board of Trustees
- Lehigh University School Study Council – Executive Council Member
- DaVinci Science Center - Board of Trustees
- The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC) - Board of Trustees
- Boy Scouts of America - Washington Crossing Council - Board of Trustees
- Springfield Township (Bucks County) Lions' Club
- Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA)
- American Society of Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- Lehigh University Alumni Association: Class correspondent

Personal Awards and Achievements

2012 – PRESENT

- Pennsylvania Superintendent of the Year (2022)
<https://buckscountyherald.com/stories/bucks-countys-palisades-bridget-oconnell-is-pennsylvania-superintendent-of-the-year.13393>
- Patriot League (Collegiate Division I) Title IX Trailblazer of Distinction (2022)
<https://thebrownandwhite.com/2022/10/20/title-ix-changes-in-sports-equity-over-the-years/>
- Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) featured in *50 Years of Title IX* Newsletter (May 2022)
- The Education Policy and Leadership Center (EPLC) Leadership Program Alumni Award (2022)
- Citation from the Pennsylvania Senate for PA Superintendent of the Year recognition (June 2022)
- Citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives (Sponsor Shelby Labs) for PA Superintendent of the Year recognition (2021)
- Commendation from Bucks County Board of Commissioners for PA Superintendent of the Year recognition (2021)
- Bucks County Intermediate Unit Outstanding Service Award (December 2019)
- Easton Area High School (Easton, PA) Wall of Fame Inductee (2016)
- American Academy of Arts and Sciences *Top 5 To Watch in 2015*
- Citation from PA Senate (Sponsor: Bob Mensch) for Palisades School District representation at White House (2014)
- Blended Schools Network *Leadership Award* (2013)

- Bucks County Board of Commissioners *Letter of Commendation for Real Hero of Bucks County* (2013)
- Citation from the PA House of Representatives (Sponsor: Marguerite C. Quinn) and the PA Senate (Sponsors: Charles J. McIlhinney, Jr., Bob Mensch, and Robert M. Tomlinson) for *Community Partner Hero Award* (2013)
- The American Red Cross, Southeast PA Chapter *Leadership Excellence and Guiding Inspiration Award* (2012)
- National Staff Development Council *Cooperative Leadership Award* (2012)

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Presentations

- #PANeedsTeachers Summit Presenter - Palisades Education Career Pathway Program (September 2022)
- Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) Women's Caucus Speaker - Striving for Wellbeing: The challenge of taking care of oneself and others (May 2022)
- PASA Leadership Forum Keynote Speaker - Building and Maintaining Relationships: Now more than ever (March 2022)
- PASA National Superintendent Certification Program presentation – Creating and sustaining career pathway advisories (June 2021)
- Lehigh School Study Council panel participant – Leadership in a pandemic: how we, as superintendents, think process, cope and persist personally as a leader (May 2021)
- PASA Conference" EdTalk and Presenter (March 2019)
- Lehigh Study Council: Safety and Security (November 2018)
- Palisades School District: Townhall on Safety and Security (November 2018)
- PA Standards Aligned Systems (SAS) Conference: College and Career Readiness (December 2018)

Presentations Prior to 2018:

- Technical Education: Featured Upper Buck County Technical School – City of Yantai, Shandong Province, China
- Raise Your Game: The Power of Female Leaders on and off the Field – panelist at Lehigh University Conference
- Leadership in the Information Age: A Changing Role for Superintendents – American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Conference
- The Transition to Digital Learning in the Palisades School District - Future Ready Summit, Baltimore, MD
- Empowered Leadership: Promoting a Culture of Capacity Building – Future Ready Webcast
- Leadership with Google Apps – Digital Ready at Google NYC
- Palisades School District Security – Presented to Palisades Community Emergency Management Team including: PA State Police, Springfield Township Police, Tincum Township Police, Upper Bucks Emergency Services, Township Managers (5), First Due Fire Companies (3), & State and Federal Legislators